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QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM MEMBER STATES

MONACO

[Original: French]

[9 May 1994]

The reform process taking place in one of the major bodies of the United Nations, the Security Council, is a unique event. It will determine how the Organization functions for many years to come, as well as its effectiveness in maintaining international peace and security, the primary responsibility for which is conferred on the Council by Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Article 24 requires the Security Council to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. In order to be effective, the Council should have a reasonable number of members that guarantees its homogeneousness, promotes confidence and facilitates dialogue.

The same article adds that, in carrying out its duties, the Council shall act on behalf of all the States Members of the United Nations.

The composition of the Security Council has changed substantially over the past few decades, at least since the last reform of that body for promoting international cooperation for peace. With its 184 Member States, the United

Nations currently reflects the entire planet, its cultures and ways of life and thinking.

The world has greatly changed over the past 50 years, and the common values that inspired the creation of the United Nations in 1945 are today more well known and shared.

Two major imperatives stipulated in the Charter in 1945 - effectiveness and representativeness - have not diminished in importance. These objectives may seem incompatible in many ways.

Our proposals should therefore reflect the still valid concerns of the authors of the Charter and at the same time take into account the sharp increase in the Organization's membership in recent years.

While respect for the principles proclaimed in 1945 precludes any change in the status of the permanent members of the Council, whose agreement is necessary for the adoption of any decision, it can be envisaged, and many have already suggested as much, that a slightly larger number of permanent members - one or two additional members - would not encounter any major institutional obstacles.

The permanent members of the Council have a special responsibility, deriving from historical circumstances and inspired by the values that led to the drafting of the Charter. Since their accession, all States Members of the Organization have gradually adopted those values not, as some may think, through a desire to imitate or as a matter of convenience, but because those values are also deeply rooted in their history and philosophy and in the collective thought - the deepest and most shared - of peoples.

In the light of these considerations, measures can be taken to increase the number of non-permanent members and change electoral procedures, as was already done during the last reform of the Security Council.

We should therefore not be too rigid and should use our imagination to explore new ways of making the Council more representative; at the same time, we should avoid creating overly rigid and inflexible categories of members.

What does the world look like today?

Some great Powers are already permanent members.

Several great and medium-sized Powers, which have both the desire and the means, are rightly interested in making a greater contribution to international cooperation.

Finally, a large number of small - and even very small - States also aspire to play a role, albeit modest, in such cooperation.

In this regard, small States have often cited the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States, established in Article 2, paragraph 1, of the Charter.

On that basis, the Principality of Monaco wishes to submit a proposal that might respond to many of the wishes that have been expressed, without jeopardizing the effectiveness of the Security Council. First, the number of members of the Council should be increased from 15 to 25; this already seems to have the support of many States.

The 20 non-permanent members, five more than the current number, could be divided equitably among the five regions, in other words, four members would be chosen from each region, according to the following procedure:

(a) On the proposal of each regional electoral group, 10 members, two from each region, could be elected by the General Assembly by a two-thirds qualified majority, for a period of at least five years.

Their term would be renewable. As representatives of large or medium-sized regional Powers, these members could play an important and long-term role in the Council.

The spirit of the end of paragraph 1 of Article 23 of the Charter, which recommends that due regard should be paid, in the first instance in the composition of the Security Council, to the contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, would be respected. The Member States most involved in this action might find in it a just reward for their efforts as well as an incentive for continuing them.

(b) The 10 other non-permanent members, also two from each region, would be elected by the General Assembly by an absolute majority, also on the proposal of their regional groups, and for a period of only one year.

Their term would not be immediately renewable.

These 10 seats, renewable on an annual basis, would provide an opportunity for each Member State, including those with the most modest resources, to participate with other nations in defending international peace and security.

Thus, the principle of equitable geographical distribution could, undoubtedly, be taken into greater account, while maintaining the role and effectiveness of the Security Council.